

Blacksburg 2046

Comprehensive Plan Executive Summary

PORTRAIT OF BLACKSBURG TOMORROW, 2046 A.D.

Blacksburg is an attractive and thriving community renowned for its quality of life and natural beauty. The town is nestled between mountain ranges that remain in a natural state with sparse, well-controlled development. Blacksburg is a community of fewer than 60,000 people. The town is noted for its scenery, environmental awareness, and clean appearance. There are a variety of housing types in Town serving all income levels. Neighborhood styles range from rural residential, suburban, and urban village to mixed-use residential with commercial.

Parks and public areas throughout Town preserve open space and scenic views. An extensive network of greenways with public trails connects neighborhoods to other neighborhoods, commercial areas, and the university. This linear network of open space is primarily used for recreation, commuting, and environmental management. Many residents walk, bike, or skate to their destination. There is a central common adjacent to downtown, which serves as the focus of the downtown area and the hub of the greenway network. Stream valleys are preserved in an open state such that many brooks and small streams, in particular the tributaries of Tom's and Stroubles creeks, visibly wind through the town. The trails in Town connect with adjacent national parks and local recreation areas. The Huckleberry Trail extends to New River Trail State Park and the Jefferson-George Washington National Forest.



Figure ES-1, The Huckleberry Trail

Neighborhoods east of the Bypass are well established with mature landscaping and properties are well maintained. The area west of the Bypass is largely open with scenic views of the Tom's Creek Basin. Rural residential clusters dot the area overlooking this stream valley, which is a public park. The preservation of these large and scenic areas of open space, and steep slopes has been achieved through the ability of property owners to receive density bonuses for the preservation of significant open space. Some properties in this area are agricultural, providing pastureland. Trout fishing and other recreational use of Tom's Creek is a major attraction, and bicycle, pedestrian and equestrian trails meander through the valley. A variety of shops are interspersed within the neighborhoods and are used as community gathering places.

The historic downtown has small town character and charm with buildings no more than two or three stories in height, mature street trees, brick walkways,

pedestrian benches, historic markers, and post top lighting. The storefronts are close to the road and attractive canopies and signs indicate each shop. Hanging baskets and flower gardens along the streets are constant reminders of the value the community places on appearance. The Blacksburg Historic District, including the downtown and surrounding residential areas, contains residential houses, specialty shops, inns, cafes, and professional offices in structures originally built as private homes. Parking areas are small in scale and tucked behind structures to emphasize the pedestrian focus of the area. The Miller Southside Historic District has a stronger historic fabric due its higher percentage of contributing structures. The area is primarily residential with mix-uses in the houses along Main Street.



*Figure ES-2, College Ave,
Downtown Blacksburg*

Organized recreation opportunities abound for children, adults, and seniors including team sports and individual activities on a year round basis. The town hosts sporting events including international bicycle races, mountain bike races, soccer tournaments, Senior Olympics, and collegiate sports. In addition, a minor league baseball team calls Blacksburg home. Festivals, which are family focused, are frequent throughout the year and draw tourists from across the country.

Blacksburg is a base for tourists frequenting the natural and regional attractions of the area such as the New River, Appalachian Trail, national forests, state parks, historic landmarks, and ecosystem preserves. Virginia Tech hosts teams from across the nation in intercollegiate sports.



Figure ES-3, The New River

The town has a strong and diverse base of employment centers, which includes service, retail, commercial, and industry. Blacksburg leads the region, and is renowned, for encouraging high tech, clean industries that support, and are served by, university research initiatives. [Virginia Tech](#) remains the major employer in the area and acts as an international base for research, bringing experts into the area for symposiums and project collaboration. In addition, the university educates students world wide through satellite and global telecommunications resources.



Figure ES-4, Corporate Research Center

Residences and businesses access the [Blacksburg Electronic Village](#), or its successor, to request and provide services. A significant volume of retail shopping is accomplished across the Internet and other communication networks, which has reduced traffic congestion in regional retail centers. Many local businesses, including the business centers in the South Main, Downtown, and Prices Fork commercial areas, market their products internationally and provide workspace to employees of worldwide corporations. These business centers provide access for administrative support, bookkeeping services, conference areas, reproduction machines, and other fundamental business resources.

The town boasts a culturally diverse population with access to many opportunities to appreciate the arts. Many authors and artists make Blacksburg their home. In participation with the university, we sponsor performing arts, exhibits, and seminars. Many activities are available for retirees, organized by the town and privately. The town has preserved many cultural resources that are enjoyed by the community including historic



Figure ES-5, Price House

buildings in the downtown area; houses constructed in different periods in various residential neighborhoods; and significant architectural works, public art, town spring sites, magnificent specimen trees, and stagecoach routes.

The urban services of the town extend to Ellett Valley, Price Mountain, Brush Mountain, and New River. These areas appear to be a seamless extension of the town commercial and neighborhood areas to which they are adjacent. All areas are served with a comprehensive solid waste management and recycling program which is funded through a variable rate based on the amount of waste generated. Solid waste disposal is regionally coordinated and handled in a state-of-the-art, environmentally sensitive manner. Public water and sewerage systems serve all properties within the town with high quality drinking water and a public sewerage system that is state-of-the-art and effective in protecting and preserving the natural resources, stream, and groundwater quality, and plants and animals of the region. Electrical power is wirelessly transmitted along with communications. Power and communication antennas are integrated into the community along with existing infrastructure such as water towers, rooftops, steeples, treetops, signs, and other appropriate manmade or natural features. These public utilities include provisions to assure continuation of services in emergency situations. The government structure is regional in nature providing public schools, social services, and court services in Blacksburg, which are progressive, responsive, and accessible to the community.

The local transportation network includes extensive mass transit opportunities that include the Blacksburg Transit bus system, a street network that accommodates cars and alternative fuel vehicles, paths and lanes for bikes, skates, and other alternative transportation means, trails for horseback riders, and sidewalks and walkways for pedestrians. All facilities are accessible to the physically

challenged and mapped on the Blacksburg Electronic Village. Bus stops include electronic kiosks that show the location of buses along the route. Streets are well maintained, appropriately lighted and landscaped with medians or street trees, emphasizing the town's identity as a green community. The region's transportation network is fully integrated and Blacksburg residents can easily reach their destinations in a safe, pleasant manner using whichever mode of transportation is desired.



Figure ES-6, Blacksburg Transit

The community is linked to a regional transportation system with smart interstate highways that separate truck traffic, a high speed passenger service using light rail technology, commuter park and ride lots with bus access to nearby cities, and the Virginia Tech / Montgomery Regional Airport, a public airport serving commuter planes and corporate jet traffic. The New River Valley Airport serves as a major cargo depot for our industries and retail establishments, and the Roanoke Airport is the regional passenger airport serving large aircraft and national flights. We enjoy a greenway trail network that extends to the Roanoke Valley, Catawba Valley, Radford, Christiansburg, and adjacent state and national parks including the Appalachian and New River Trails.



Figure ES-7, Route 460

The Blacksburg community is extremely safe. The police are active in the community, supporting civic organizations, working with youth, and focusing on crime prevention. There are foot and bicycle patrols, along with vehicle patrols. Response to emergency calls for Police, Fire, and Rescue is rapid and the personnel are well trained and professional in dealing with all situations in a proficient and compassionate manner. The town supports first class fire and rescue capability with stations located throughout the community and the best equipment available for the services provided.



Figure ES-8, Blacksburg Police Department

The town has a low property tax rate and a diverse revenue stream, derived from various fees and taxes, which spread the burden of municipal services across those who use the services. User fees are emphasized for utility and recreation services. The local government delivers cost effective services in partnership with private entities and civic organizations. The finances of the government are

managed in a conservative manner, attaining the highest bond rating available for fiscal integrity, and invested in the appropriate maintenance, expansion, and improvement of our urban infrastructure.

Blacksburg is a renowned “whole life community” with excellent, accredited medical facilities and professionals in town that are easily accessible via public transit. Progressive public and private schools, and a university, which is internationally recognized in many areas including smart transportation technology, wireless communication, and global competitiveness, draw people to the community and maintain an intellectually stimulating environment.



Figure ES-9, Burruss Hall - Virginia Tech

PLAN GOALS

Community Design

Guide development in a logical manner while providing a livable and sustainable community through design that enhances Blacksburg's unique character.

Natural Environment & Open Space

Identify and preserve the natural resources that characterize Blacksburg and provide access to its scenic characteristics for community enjoyment by creating an open space network that retains the beauty of the natural environment and the unique feel and character of the town.

Parks & Recreation

Provide inclusive facilities, in conjunction with schools and private organizations that present a variety of recreational amenities including passive and active programs for residents of all ages.

Greenways

Develop a greenway system that provides natural buffers that improve water quality, reduce the impacts of flooding, and provide wildlife habitat and corridors, as well as opportunities for comprehensive, multi-use trails for alternative transportation, recreation, fitness, and educational, cultural and economic development.

Historic Preservation

Conserve and enhance Blacksburg's unique identity and its small town character by protecting significant historic structures, landmarks, and properties.

Economic Development

Increase quality employment opportunities, the town's taxable base, the diversity of business offerings and the quality of business districts while ensuring the sustainability of the economy and improving general quality of life.

Information Technology

In partnership with the private sector, non-profit organizations, other government entities and Virginia Tech, use technology to expand community cohesiveness, to take advantage of new technological opportunities, to enhance public services, and to make Blacksburg a model community in the use of technology to improve quality of life.

Utility Services

Provide all properties within the town's service area adequate and reliable utility services that meet demand in a customer service oriented manner; and achieve these services through safe, environmentally sensitive, and cost efficient methods by partnering with state and local governments, utility franchises, and other public service entities.

Transportation

Provide an integrated, multi-modal transportation system that is safe, economical, ecologically sound, and aesthetically pleasing, serving a diverse population including the physically challenged.

Public Safety

Promote a safe community by providing the highest quality of public safety services available with first-class equipment and well-trained personnel who are prepared for a wide variety of emergencies, and who serve the community in a personal and effective manner.

Government Relations

Partner with federal, state, and local governments, businesses, industries, and other area stakeholders to facilitate effective, two-way communication in order to plan and to develop as a unified region.

Community Facilities & Human Services

Provide community facilities and human services that are progressive, accessible, and responsive to the needs of the community.

Neighborhood Planning

To promote the organization and enhancement of neighborhoods, and to provide the opportunity for comfortable and well-maintained housing for all citizens.

TOWN SECTORS OVERVIEW

The Town of Blacksburg is divided into nine sectors including the area immediately adjacent to the town's boundaries in Montgomery County. The sector chapters originated in the 1996 Comprehensive Plan as the land use portion of the plan. They have been expanded to include major issues of concern, including land use, as expressed by Town citizens and representatives. Sector boundaries have been modified to encompass each of the 24 neighborhood planning areas.

PUBLIC INPUT

The *Unique Characteristics*, *Critical Issues*, and *Neighborhoods* sections of each sector chapter reflect the direct public input received from residents within each sector. These views were gathered from various neighborhood and comprehensive plan meetings, surveys, and e-mails. The primary purpose of these sections is to characterize the sector and its neighborhoods according to how the citizens of that sector view current conditions. Every effort has been made to accurately and fairly reflect the major issues. While the community cannot enhance its quality of life if the most critical issues are watered down or ignored, neither can it progress in a divisive atmosphere. These sections take a hard look at the critical issues within the community in a spirit of open communication, honesty, and cooperation. The **Vision** and subsequent *Special Considerations* and *Changes from Existing Land Use Map* sections are also derived from public input and the characteristics and issues of each sector.

DEFINITIONS OF LAND USE CATEGORIES

Public/Private Park Land:

Dedicated open space or recreational space, whether owned publicly or privately. This category includes dedicated open space easements.

Agricultural/Vacant:

Land in agricultural use or parcels with no structural development nor any designated open space use, such as a park or golf course.

Very Low Density Residential:

Small clusters of residential up to a net density of one dwelling unit per acre, with some low intensity agricultural uses.

Low Density Residential:

Up to four dwelling units per acre.

Transitional Residential:

Up to and including ten dwelling units per acre; or up to 20 bedrooms per acre, whichever is less.

Mixed Use:

Business/professional offices, institutional, studios, gallery/museum, crafts, specialty shops, bed & breakfast, clusters of transitional residential housing.

High Density Residential:

More than ten dwelling units per acre; or more than 20 bedrooms per acre.

Civic:

Schools, places of worship, government offices or use, clubs and other institutional uses. This category includes Greek social/fraternal organizations.

University:

Academic buildings, residence halls, administrative offices, appurtenant uses (e.g., dining halls, bookstores, etc.) and parking lots to support those activities.

Professional Office:

Offices where professional services are being provided, but retail sales or manufacturing do not take place. Examples include realtors, architects, engineers, physicians, or lawyers.

Commercial:

Retail sales establishments, restaurants, hotels/motels, service stations.

Research/Light Industrial:

Research and development, assembly, packaging, processing, or manufacturing which does not emit smoke, noise, soot, dirt, vibration, odor etc.

Industrial:

Medium and heavy manufacturing which may produce moderate to significant external effects. Uses include raw materials processing, assembly lines, and other large-scale operations.

POLICIES

Overall Land Use

- ❑ Manage growth. Managed growth means guiding growth in relation to community goals. Managed growth means decisions will be made in concert with the land's natural carrying capacity, the community's ability to financially support development through the provision of infrastructure and related community services and facilities, the community's desire and need for additional growth and development, and related provisions contained in the comprehensive plan.

- ❑ New infrastructure and new public services will be planned in direct relationship to the managed growth policy above. Any new infrastructure and/or new public services deemed necessary during this plan's projected time frame will be analyzed, studied and considered for the town's Capital Improvements Program.
- ❑ Preserve significant open space to buffer development and to preserve the area's view shed.
- ❑ Encourage land use patterns that promote energy conservation by seeking a balance between in-fill development and the reduction of congestion.
- ❑ Encourage in-fill development in established areas that is compatible with existing and/or planned land use, that is at a compatible scale with the surrounding area, and that can be supported by adequate public facilities and transportation systems.
- ❑ Achieve compatible transitions between adjoining land uses through the control of height and the use of appropriate buffering and screening.
- ❑ Stabilize residential neighborhoods adjacent to commercial areas through the establishment of transitional land uses, vegetated buffers and/or architectural screens, and the control of vehicular access.
- ❑ Utilize landscaping and open space along rights-of-way to minimize the impacts of incompatible land uses separated by roadways.
- ❑ Use cluster development as one means to enhance environmental preservation when the smaller lot sizes permitted would allow more sensitive development of local topography with less land disturbance, or would enable continuity of greenways.
- ❑ Encourage planned developments. Increased density or intensity of development may be justified based on site design considerations.
- ❑ Encourage the underground placement of all existing wired facilities.
- ❑ Places of worship are shown on the future land use map in their 2001 locations, because they are important anchors in a neighborhood and should be retained. They are an appropriate use in most neighborhoods when developed at a scale consistent with the surrounding community, as allowed by special use permit. The town does not wish to limit future locations of places of worship to the indicated map areas.

Community Design

- ❑ Encourage cluster development and preservation of open space.
- ❑ Encourage neo-traditional type development.
- ❑ Protect the integrity and quality of forested areas as buffers, habitat, and pollutant removal systems, and ensure the retention of existing high-quality trees and woodlands and the planting of new trees during land development.
- ❑ Protect scenic views, rural community atmosphere, and landscape character.

Natural Environment and Open Space

- ❑ Protect the region's scenic views, rural-community atmosphere, and natural character by preserving large areas of open space throughout Town.
- ❑ Conserve and protect networks and corridors of natural vegetation, forest cover, wildlife habitat, and undeveloped steep slopes.
- ❑ Promote innovative land use management and building techniques in the region to enhance and preserve the natural environment and utilize energy efficiently, while also accommodating for future development. Techniques may include infill and cluster developments, enhanced use of bikeways and sidewalks, environmentally friendly lighting, and public transportation.
- ❑ Encourage both private and public efforts to preserve agricultural and open lands through land trusts, open space easements, and fee simple acquisition.
- ❑ Utilize Planned Residential and Rural Residential zoning as an open space preservation technique, and continue to educate the public on the benefits.

Parks and Recreation

- ❑ Utilize Capital Improvement Program (CIP) land banking funds to purchase land for local parks and partner with Montgomery County for the acquisition and development of land for regional and district parks.

Greenways

- ❑ Coordinate the greenway system with area stormwater management.
- ❑ Preserve and reclaim natural floodplains to enhance water quality; protect wildlife habitats and open space; and provide recreational, educational, and alternative transportation opportunities.

- ❑ Develop an attractive, cost-effective, and convenient greenway system that connects public and private open spaces throughout Blacksburg such as the Virginia Tech campus and the Hoge land trust.
- ❑ Encourage private support and development of greenways that use planned and existing utility easements, road acquisition and construction, etc. to minimize public costs of greenway development.
- ❑ Develop a greenway system that protects the biological diversity of plant and animal species, maintains the connections between natural communities, provides wildlife corridors, includes the area's natural and cultural diversity, and preserves linear stretches of open space.

Historic Preservation

- ❑ Pursue the creation of additional historic overlay districts where there is a concentration of historic structures and good community support

Economic Development

- ❑ Implement parking solutions that address the need for expanded, convenient, and attractively designed parking.
- ❑ Create a unique attraction(s) in the downtown that will create an exciting sense of place, change local perceptions, and attract families, students, visitors, and shoppers. Host community festivals and downtown events to attract consumers to the downtown area.
- ❑ Create opportunities for new retail space in downtown.
- ❑ Increase the town's capacity to support new commercial development.
- ❑ Improve the utilization of prime retail space in Blacksburg for retail uses.
- ❑ Work in partnership with Virginia Tech and the development community to meet the projected demand for multi-family housing.
- ❑ Work with the county to control residential growth at Blacksburg's borders.
- ❑ Expand industrial development opportunities at Blacksburg Industrial Park.
- ❑ Protect established single-family neighborhoods from the encroachment of rental and commercial conversions.

Information Technology

- ❑ Continue to be proactive in the design and siting of wireless telecommunication facilities.

Utilities

- ❑ Participate with local governments in regional infrastructure planning and to better coordinate extensions across town boundaries.
- ❑ Provide public wastewater service to all areas within the town: to the Tom's Creek area and the 1998 boundary adjusted area utilizing the Capital Improvement Program; to already developed areas of Town on a cost share basis; and to new development areas at the developer's expense.
- ❑ Require new, unsewered developments to provide a wastewater collection system on-site to enable connection to a public wastewater system once it becomes available.
- ❑ Support alternate methods to land filling solid waste to help conserve natural resources and help extend the life of the landfill in an environmentally responsible manner.
- ❑ Encourage the use of ditch sharing between utility companies to avoid separate parallel ditches.
- ❑ Support the development and expansion of natural gas service that is reliable and cost effective.

Transportation

- ❑ Minimize the impact of interstate construction on the character and scenic nature of the town.
- ❑ Support the improvement of key highway corridors in the Roanoke and New River Valleys with particular sensitivity to safety, quality of life, and natural beauty.
- ❑ Encourage development of an intermodal hub (air, highway, and rail) and distribution terminal in the New River/ Roanoke valley region.
- ❑ Develop the arterial and collector street system in accordance with the Street Classification map.
- ❑ Provide for the interconnection of neighborhoods and parcels with local streets and with collector or arterial streets where planned or dictated by traffic volumes.
- ❑ Plan for new roads in the central portion of Town, which are consistent with the historical grid network and complete the street grid system.
- ❑ Support the retention and utilization of existing alleys.
- ❑ Encourage the provision of new alleys into development projects.

- ❑ Coordinate land use decisions with existing and planned public transportation services.
- ❑ Create a network of sidewalks that serves the entire community and provides for safe pedestrian access to all potential destinations in Town including public schools, downtown, Virginia Tech, community facilities, major shopping areas, and residential areas. Allow a variety of sidewalk sizes and materials as appropriate to setting and use.
- ❑ Improve the supply of public and private parking facilities in Town, and ensure that these facilities are visually pleasing and consistent with the character of the town by being unobtrusive, extensively landscaped, and appropriately lighted.
- ❑ Prevent incompatible land uses from encroaching on the airport and its safety zones in order to avoid future hazards or nuisances to aircraft and the town's citizens.

Public Safety

- ❑ Maintain public safety facilities to meet community needs.

Government Relations

- ❑ Encourage proactive, well planned initiatives that keep the region ahead of the latest development issues.
- ❑ Communicate with local businesses and related interests to foster an atmosphere of support and to encourage sustainable economic development throughout the region.

Community Facilities

- ❑ Retain civic activity centers downtown, such as the Farmers Market, the Lyric Theatre, and the municipal complex.
- ❑ Provide facilities to meet existing and anticipated community needs (e.g., recreational, day care, educational, etc.).
- ❑ Develop the downtown central common for assembly, public recreation, and festival uses.
- ❑ Provide multiple downtown gathering spaces for all walks of life.
- ❑ Provide public facilities that serve as examples of the desired development quality in Town.

Neighborhood Planning

- ❑ Provide an appropriate mix of housing styles and choices, allowing for different types of housing from neighborhood to neighborhood.
- ❑ Reduce the suburbanization of ridgelines.

DOWNTOWN

VISION

Downtown Blacksburg is the heart of Town. It is the geographic and cultural center, and historic center of commerce and business. Downtown gives Blacksburg its identity as a college town. It reflects Blacksburg's past in its shops and houses and by establishing the cultural center of the community.



Figure ES-10, Downtown

As it includes the town's central business district, it anchors the rest of Town with pedestrian scale buildings, streets, sidewalks, and landscaping. Close proximity to the Virginia Tech campus adds to the vitality of the area.

The core of the downtown area exudes the vitality of interaction of people and activities. The small town scale and character is apparent by the strong pedestrian orientation and emphasis on historic character, walking paths, and landscaping. Commercial opportunities include a diversity of specialty retail, services, cultural/recreation/entertainment activities, and public functions.

The surrounding neighborhoods include a dynamic mix of uses linked by a common historic residential character. The western area includes a mix of single-family homes and student apartments, galleries, artist studios, bed and breakfast establishments, specialty shops, and small-scale office and institutional uses within existing houses.

The eastern area is also an eclectic mix of primarily residential uses. Historic structures are carefully renovated and new construction maintains and reinforces the historic fabric of the area. The Roanoke Street area serves as a tree lined corridor and focal point for the eastern entrance into Town with its landscaping and renovated structures.

Special Considerations

All elements of [Rediscovering the Heart of Blacksburg](#), the Downtown Master Plan, are discussed thoroughly in the *Community Design*, *Economic Development*, *Transportation*, and *Community Facilities* chapters of this comprehensive plan and support, but are not limited to, the following recommendations:

- ◆ Historic structures are retained and new construction is designed to be in keeping with the historic character of surrounding areas, and in conformance with the [Blacksburg Historic District Guidelines](#).
- ◆ Virginia Tech campus highlights a primary gateway entrance to the university at the Mall, enriching and enlivening the downtown area. Their Campus Master Plan should be seamlessly integrated with the Downtown Master Plan.
- ◆ Construct gateway enhancements into the downtown area such as at the Clay-Main Street and Main Street-Prices Fork intersections. A roundabout would be an attractive method for calming traffic as it enters the downtown area at the Mall entrance. Wilson Avenue could be extended to Main Street at the intersection providing for multi-directional ingress and egress for the downtown and university.
- ◆ Henderson Lawn, the town's central plaza, is the focus for festivals, crafts, and other public and commercial functions. Virginia Tech is planning a creative arts center to be located just north of the lawn, adding a cultural dimension to this entrance into downtown and the university. Work with Virginia Tech to facilitate construction of the creative arts center with an exhibition facility to showcase the downtown as a substantial arts and cultural node.
- ◆ A greenway extends from Bicentennial Square next to the Police Station into the downtown, across Henderson Lawn, extending to the Bennett Hill neighborhood. This pathway will eventually connect with the Municipal Park and includes community spaces and parks with shelters, landscaping, signage, and lighting where appropriate.
- ◆ Places of worship are shown on the future land use map in their 2001 locations, because they are important anchors in a neighborhood and should be retained. They are an appropriate use in most neighborhoods when developed at a scale consistent with the surrounding community, as allowed by special use permit. The town does not wish to limit future locations of places of worship to the indicated map areas.
- ◆ Specialty shops, arts and crafts, upscale restaurants and cafes, condominiums, and commercial/business enterprises are concentrated in the Downtown Commercial area and provide vitality.
- ◆ The downtown area includes a significant number of residents located in studios and lofts. This residential element adds life at all hours of the day to

the center of Town. New structured parking facilities should incorporate residential dwellings along the front of the structure. In addition new downtown development should incorporate residential uses.

- ◆ Building heights and yard requirements are limited in order to protect the small town architectural character and scale. Facade improvements to the front, side, and rear of stores will reinforce the historic character and pedestrian nature of the area, and improve the downtown's overall appearance. A façade grant program should be investigated for implementation.
- ◆ Design standards and continuity of landscaped public space, signage, and street furniture throughout the sector unify the area.
- ◆ Public off-street parking on the periphery of the district, and on underutilized parcels within the district, is provided through joint public-private parking developments with the university, places of worship, and private businesses. Parking is heavily landscaped to enhance the appearance of the district while providing a needed resource. Parking areas developed as part of a commercial venture are located behind the structure and are well landscaped.
- ◆ Roanoke Street is a main entrance to a pedestrian oriented downtown, and contains an architecturally diverse and mixed use of properties. Amenities in the Roanoke Street area should encourage public use creating a heightened need to provide sidewalks along both sides of Roanoke Street along with appropriate lighting and street furnishings.
- ◆ Giles Road should be extended from North Main Street to connect with Turner Street as recommended in the Downtown Master Plan.
- ◆ The small town architectural character and scale of the area west of Draper Road is preserved discouraging multi-unit uses. The scale and character of the predominately residential uses of the district and the remaining historic or architecturally significant properties are preserved.
- ◆ Planned commercial and residential development is located in the “New Town” area, flanking Turner and Barger Streets, incorporating unifying site design elements such as landscaping, buffered parking, and architectural features consistent with the surrounding area.
- ◆ Create a cohesive government campus along Main Street and Draper Road in a park plaza design centered around town hall, the police station, and library that contain unifying elements.
- ◆ Residential infill in the downtown area should be encouraged as recommended in the Downtown Master Plan. Many vacant or underutilized sites are either developable or in need of rehabilitation, and prime locations for new dwelling units. The consolidation of properties in the Houston-Harrell

neighborhood is encouraged to transition this area to better serve the university and town's interests.

- ◆ New lodging facilities should be encouraged downtown. The closing of the Donaldson Brown Hotel / Conference Center will cause a lack of lodging facilities in downtown Blacksburg.
- ◆ The middle school property is the southern anchor of the downtown area. This space must be fully utilized for civic-oriented functions, such as continued primary or secondary educational use, in order to continue to serve as a central space for the community to gather and interact. Montgomery County Schools has track record of partnerships. The town needs to explore and support partnering opportunities to continue educational uses in this facility and work closely with the county and school system to maximize the use of this vital community asset. The Downtown Master Plan is an excellent resource to plan and facilitate the future use of the property.

Changes from Existing Land Use Map

- The pedestrian oriented commercial area is expanded to encompass the places of worship along Church Street, extending half a block to Penn Street. This delineation allows for conforming modifications to the places of worship and expansion of office uses, while maintaining the residential character of surrounding streets.
- Downtown Eastside is designated as mixed use or transitional residential, allowing up to 10 dwelling units per acre. Roanoke Street serves as a tree lined corridor and focal point for the district with its landscaping and renovated structures.
- Civic activities are designated in the area where the municipal complex and library are located. Additionally, the designation is extended to include property up to Main Street and Miller Street, as well as directly across Main Street.
- The residential area generally to the west of Main Street, extending to the campus, is designated as mixed use. This area contains small-scale office and institutional use, tourist homes, bed and breakfast, studios, galleries, crafts, and specialty shops, primarily focused within existing structures. A visually attractive pedestrian atmosphere and environment exists.
- The Houston-Harrell neighborhood is designated as Transitional Residential use for academic buildings, transitional residential housing (20 bedrooms or less per acre), or other university-related uses that may be appropriate and do not adversely impact the adjacent low-density residential neighborhood. This area needs significant infrastructure and public safety improvements including a secondary access. Virginia Tech, or associated private interests, may be the best steward of this area since its main population is student oriented.

SOUTH END

VISION

The town's "front door" provides a sophisticated, attractive first impression of Blacksburg. The concentration of well-landscaped green space is prominent upon approaching Town from the Blacksburg Bypass. The area also boasts well-planned parks for light industry, research, technology, and professional offices. These businesses reinforce the high quality landscaping by placing a strong emphasis on appearance. Near Virginia Tech's Corporate Research Center, transitional residential areas provide short-term housing for visiting research specialists and scientists.

West of the Route 460 Bypass, there are dedicated open space areas with single-family homes along with research and professional office uses interspersed among the woodlands and pastures. A good sidewalk, bicycle, and trail system links pedestrians and bicyclists to the rest of Town. The transportation network is multi-modal, well maintained, and safely accommodates vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Growth is gradual and controlled, reducing impacts on the natural and social environment.

Special Considerations

- ◆ A fire and rescue facility in or near the South End sector is needed. Locations may include airport land, the Corporate Research Center, or other currently vacant properties.
- ◆ A portion of the 36 acres that the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) will vacate should be utilized as high-end commercial development for a hotel/conference center or professional office space that supports either the Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center (CRC) or Montgomery Regional Hospital. The remainder of the site should be utilized as a park with connections to the Huckleberry Trail and CRC trail system. Development should be sensitive to height and placement of structures and use appropriate screening and buffering to reduce the visual impact on the surrounding area and to provide an open, well-maintained appearance.
- ◆ A 40-acre nature park could be established to protect the area of ravines and poor soils west of the Route 460 Bypass. A park with hiking trails, wildflower trails, and picnic areas would have good pedestrian access from the extended Huckleberry Trail to the west, and vehicular access from Farmview Drive to the east.
- ◆ The east side of South Main Street, designated as office and commercial, development should be sensitive to the character of the area, attractive, and heavily landscaped especially along the road frontage. Strip development is not desired.

- ◆ Appropriate signage and displays should be installed along the Huckleberry Trail and nearby parks to recognize the coal-mining heritage of this part of Town.
- ◆ Places of worship are shown on the future land use map in their 2001 locations, because they are important anchors in a neighborhood and should be retained. They are an appropriate use in most neighborhoods when developed at a scale consistent with the surrounding community, as allowed by special use permit. The town does not wish to limit future locations of places of worship to the indicated map areas.

Changes From Existing Land Use Map

- The Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center and the Blacksburg Industrial Park will both develop to their full capacity. The industrial park will not expand beyond its present boundaries, unless land becomes available across the town line in Montgomery County.
- The vacated 36 acres of land near the Route 460 Blacksburg Interchange is designated as Professional Office for the development of a hotel/conference center with appropriately designed open space and trail connections.
- The portions of land along Hightop Road that were incorporated into the town with the boundary adjustment will develop as Professional Office to support the medical needs of Montgomery Regional Hospital.
- The portions of land along South Main Street which were incorporated into the town with the boundary adjustment will develop as Commercial or Professional Office, and will maintain any significant open space critical to the area's view shed.
- The portions of land along Jennelle Road which were incorporated into the town with the boundary adjustment will develop as Industrial or Professional Office, and will maintain the campus-like standard already present in the industrial park.
- Professional Office or Commercial uses along South Main Street from the new interchange to Ellett Road will utilize creative designs, minimize the impact to adjacent open spaces, preserve additional significant green space, and maintain the area's unique view shed.
- The area along Ramble Road, near the Corporate Research Center, may accommodate high density residential or professional office uses as the road infrastructure and public transit service allows. Multifamily residential units and office buildings should be appropriately screened and attractively constructed to preserve the view shed along the South Main Street corridor.

SOUTHWEST

VISION

The Southwest sector contains a mix of rural and residential areas with working agricultural and open areas interspersed with residences. Many housing types exist, including large higher priced homes, smaller affordable homes, townhouses, and apartments. A variety of people reside in the area, including Virginia Tech students, families, professionals, and retirees, and are served by a community child day care facility. A strong sense of community and neighborhood pride exists. All sections of Hethwood are well maintained, landscaped, and decorated with seasonal plantings to enhance the natural beauty of the area.

Three commercial nodes exist; one at the interchange of Price's Fork Road and the Route 460 Bypass, one at the intersection of Price's Fork Road and Hethwood Boulevard, and a small node at the intersection of Tall Oaks Drive and Southgate Drive. The Price's Fork Road/Bypass node consists of uses that serve the town as a whole. The node at Prices Fork Road and Hethwood Boulevard provides uses to serve the whole sector. Businesses include a grocery store, drug store, a restaurant, and smaller specialty shops and businesses providing personal services for area residents. The node located at the intersection of Tall Oaks Drive and Southgate Drive consists of a small neighborhood convenience center, designed to fit in with the residential character of the area and serve residents of the immediate area.

The area to the west of Stroubles Mill subdivision is either a district park or a very low density, planned residential development. The area to the east of Stroubles Mill is a mixed planned development that includes areas of high and transitional residential, a small commercial node to serve area residents, university facilities, and part of the Corporate Research Center. The Stroubles Creek greenway is integrated into the development and acts as a natural buffer between different residential densities. Virginia Tech-owned agricultural areas are open and used for the raising of livestock, agricultural research, and recreation. Development in surrounding areas in Montgomery County is coordinated with the development pattern in Town. Hethwood residents enjoy scenic views of Price and Brush Mountains. Tree cover remains and the only development consists of scattered residential units on large lots.

Public parks and open spaces are located throughout the area and attract a wide range of users. Public areas include fields for active and organized recreational use, scenic natural areas for walking and picnicking, and trails for walking, jogging, or cycling. Stroubles Creek remains in an open, natural state and runs through a

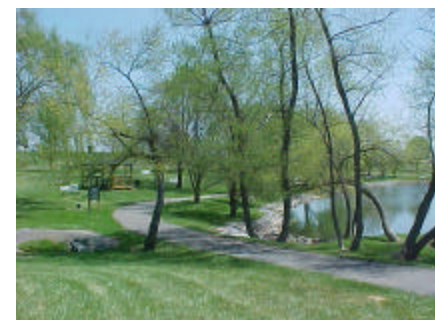


Figure ES-11, Hethwood Park

surrounding greenway corridor. The Stroubles Creek Greenway is a valuable open space feature and is enjoyed by many Blacksburg residents. Community facilities exist to support indoor recreational activities such as basketball, volleyball, and physical fitness classes and cultural activities such as community art displays and classes, theater, and musical activities. Both senior and youth activities are provided at these facilities.

A public/private off-road trail system links all residential developments, commercial nodes, greenway areas, and the Virginia Tech campus. The trail system is convenient to residents and heavily used for short trips and commuting to Virginia Tech. Transportation access to the Hethwood area is convenient. Three major roads serve the area: Price's Fork Road, Southgate Drive, and Merrimac Road. Bicycle and pedestrian access to nearby destinations is safe and practical. Transit stops are located throughout the area.

Special Considerations

- ◆ Commercial uses should be designed to fit the character of the area in which they are located. Designs should seek to create a community gathering place as well as a commercial center. Commercial centers should be integrated with the surrounding residential area to provide convenient pedestrian access. Development should be appropriately screened and attractively constructed to preserve the view shed along the Prices Fork/Route 460 Bypass corridors.
- ◆ New multi-family residential areas should be arranged with the buildings oriented toward common areas to increase community interaction among residents and to de-emphasize parking lots. Multi-family areas should be sited to minimize conflicts between student and non-student residential areas. The university should consider providing additional residential structures on land locally zoned, or otherwise appropriate, for such use.
- ◆ Innovative transportation modes should be considered for linking areas with high concentrations of Virginia Tech students, such as Fox Ridge, with the core campus.
- ◆ Bike-walkways and sidewalks should be extended into all new residential developments to encourage pedestrian circulation.
- ◆ The area south and west of Kipps elementary school and the middle school is well suited for the expansion of community facilities such as a district park for formal, active recreation, and should be seriously considered.
- ◆ Planned residential development, with limited neighborhood commercial areas, should be encouraged on the properties to the north and south of existing Hethwood with accommodations for appropriate collector/access roads.

- ◆ Where sanitary sewer service is currently unavailable, developments should either provide for the ultimate connection to sanitary sewer when the system is available or provide a publicly approved decentralized wastewater system.
- ◆ The Creek Valley Overlay District is necessary to protect water quality and reduce the potential for contamination.
- ◆ Any land disturbing activities, fertilizer/herbicide application, or other possible sources of water contamination should be buffered an adequate distance from Stroubles Creek with natural vegetation to protect water quality.
- ◆ Land and/or trail easements should be acquired along Stroubles Creek to extend Hethwood's trail system to the town's greenway system.
- ◆ An Open Space Land Use Assessment tax break is needed to encourage the dedication of open space by large landowners.
- ◆ Development should be clustered on less than half of the site with the remainder of the site being reserved in permanent open space.
- ◆ Preservation of open space is a special consideration when reviewing development in the Southwest sector. Ridgelines, hilltops, land identified in the Greenway Master Plan, land adjacent to existing public parks, to existing preserved open space or to the Creek Valley Overlay is of significant value to the community. It may be appropriate to consider an increase in density for the development of a parcel where land of significant value off-site will be preserved as open space. This special consideration may only occur if the land is determined to be of significant value to the community and the additional density does not compromise the integrity of the receiving site. Approximately three-quarters or more of the off-site parcel may be proffered as permanent open space.
- ◆ Both public and private efforts to preserve agricultural and open lands through land trusts, open space easements, purchase of development rights, and fee simple acquisition is strongly encouraged.
- ◆ Places of worship are shown on the future land use map in their 2001 locations, because they are important anchors in a neighborhood and should be retained. They are an appropriate use in most neighborhoods when developed at a scale consistent with the surrounding community, as allowed by special use permit. The town does not wish to limit future locations of places of worship to the indicated map areas.

Changes From Existing Land Use Map

- Future development adjacent to the Route 460 Bypass and Prices Fork Road interchange should be well planned to minimize deterioration of the viewscape. Appropriate screening and innovative construction are encouraged to preserve the view shed along these vital traffic corridors.
- Heather Drive's extension to Glade Road and the Southgate/314 West extension to Merrimac Road are important connector roads for this sector that will improve public safety and alleviate increasing traffic congestion.
- Stroubles Creek and its surrounding floodplain are designated as public greenway.
- Open agricultural land to the west of the Stroubles Mill subdivision is designated as a District Park or very, low density planned residential compatible with the adjacent residences.
- Open agricultural lands to the east of Stroubles Mill subdivision and to the north of Oak Manor are designated as pockets of medium and high density planned residential with greenway areas separating the different densities.
- Land designated as Very Low Density Residential may be included in a Conservation Overlay, Planned Residential, or Rural Residential zoning district.
- A Conservation Overlay District may include limited very low-density residential development, recreation areas, agricultural land, and open space.

NORTHWEST

VISION

The Northwest sector is a rural residential area in which homes are located close together in groups preserving significant open space that protects natural resources such as water quality, tree cover, wildlife, and scenic vistas. The natural terrain and drainage ways are maintained by sensitively siting development to take advantage of natural features, and to minimize physical and visual disturbances.



The natural and agricultural character of the sector is preserved, while achieving creative residential site designs. There is a central greenway core that surrounds Tom's Creek which is public, undeveloped, and includes large pastures and natural vegetation. This central greenway is a recreational, scenic, and natural resource, protecting water quality in Tom's Creek and underground aquifers, and providing large areas of natural open space and wildlife habitat. Greenways provide pedestrian and bicycle linkages to the rest of Town and the George Washington - Jefferson National Forest.

The area's natural beauty is enhanced through the preservation of large amounts of open space within and between individual developments and the maintenance of scenic views and unique features. The basin contains a variety of housing styles, including farmsteads, which are served by public utilities and improved two lane roads with a limited number of intersections. Many recreational opportunities exist including athletic fields and trails for public use.

There is a small amount of neighborhood commercial development within the sector. These businesses cater to the needs of the local residents and do not attract significant additional traffic to the area. Larger scale commercial exists in the Southwest sector on Price's Fork Road adjacent to Hethwood and is easily accessed by the Glade-Price Fork Connector Road. The site design and scale of commercial structures are in harmony with the rural character of the area.

Special Considerations

- ◆ A public wastewater system will be provided for this sector and the larger Tom's Creek Basin.
- ◆ The Creek Valley Overlay District is necessary to protect water quality and reduce the potential for contamination.
- ◆ Any land disturbing activities, fertilizer and herbicide application, or other possible sources of water contamination should be set back an adequate distance from Tom's Creek with natural vegetative buffers to protect water quality.
- ◆ Land and/or scenic easements should be acquired along Tom's Creek to create a large greenway.
- ◆ An Open Space Land Use Assessment tax break is needed to encourage the dedication of open space by large landowners.
- ◆ Development should be clustered on less than half of the site with the remainder of the property being reserved as permanent open space.
- ◆ Preservation of open space is a special consideration when reviewing development in the Northwest sector. Ridgelines, hilltops, land identified in

the Greenway Master Plan, land adjacent to existing public parks, to existing preserved open space or to the Creek Valley Overlay is of significant value to the community. It may be appropriate to consider an increase in density for the development of a parcel where land of significant value off-site will be preserved as open space. This special consideration may only occur if the land is determined to be of significant value to the community and the additional density does not compromise the integrity of the receiving site. Approximately three-quarters or more of the off-site parcel may be proffered as permanent open space.

- ◆ Both public and private efforts to preserve agricultural and open lands through land trusts, open space easements, purchase of development rights, and fee simple acquisition are encouraged.
- ◆ Agriculture is encouraged as a by right use in the Tom's Creek neighborhood.
- ◆ Approval of special use and rezoning requests for neighborhood commercial uses will be considered when appropriate design criteria are achieved. Commercial uses should be designed to serve the immediate community and be very small in scale.
- ◆ Inclusion of small-scale neighborhood commercial uses in large planned residential developments will be considered. These establishments should be pedestrian oriented and not generate additional traffic from outside of the immediate area.
- ◆ Commercial uses that are intended to attract people off of the Route 460 Bypass should not be permitted in the sector.
- ◆ Reduced neighborhood street widths will be supported to promote a more rural setting if the safety of users is not compromised and development is located away from the right-of-way.
- ◆ Places of worship are shown on the future land use map in their 2001 locations, because they are important anchors in a neighborhood and should be retained. They are an appropriate use in most neighborhoods when developed at a scale consistent with the surrounding community, as allowed by special use permit. The town does not wish to limit future locations of places of worship to the indicated map areas.
- ◆ Sidewalks, footpaths, or appropriate alternative pedestrian circulation systems should be constructed in all new residential developments.
- ◆ Improvements will be made to Tom's Creek Road, Shadowlake Road, Meadowbrook Road, and Glade Road including two lanes, bike lanes, sidewalk, and off-road trails as appropriate to ensure the safety of current and anticipated residents.

- ◆ A future collector road from Glade Road (Heather Drive Extension) to Prices Fork Road is needed to improve traffic flow, alleviate congestion, and recognized public safety and other transportation needs as the area develops.
- ◆ A grade separated interchange at Tom's Creek Road and the Route 460 Bypass is needed and will be constructed within the next five years.

Changes From Existing Land Use Map

- Future development adjacent to either the Route 460 Bypass or the Prices Fork Road and Tom's Creek Road interchanges should be well planned to minimize deterioration of the viewscape. Appropriate screening and innovative construction are encouraged to preserve the view shed along these vital traffic corridors.
- Tom's Creek and its surrounding floodplain are designated as open, and this area is intended to be a major feature of the town greenway system.
- Land designated as Very Low Density Residential may be included in Conservation Overlay, Planned Residential, or Rural Residential zoning districts.
- A Conservation Overlay District may include limited very low density residential development, recreation areas, agricultural land, and open space.

NORTH END

VISION

The north end of Town is an area with a diversity of land uses, including older single family neighborhoods, planned residential developments, commercial establishments serving the immediate area, transitional residential areas, and areas of open and forested land. Land uses north of Givens Lane consist of low-density single-family residential developments in planned communities.

Open spaces are preserved and integrated into new developments. A variety of housing options exist with a wide range of costs to serve both first time home buyers and those who are looking for larger, higher priced homes. Creative development plans are encouraged.

North Main Street is improved to serve increased traffic and permit safe pedestrian and bicycle transportation. These improvements are designed in



Figure ES-13, Open space - Bishop Rd.

character with the rural and residential feel of the area. Additional curb cuts north of Givens Lane are limited to ensure safety and efficient traffic flow. North Main Street is well landscaped and creates an attractive entrance to Town. Residents in the north end of Town have many transportation options. The town's transit system and sidewalks and multipurpose trails serve the area well and link neighborhoods to commercial areas. New developments include internal sidewalk and trail systems.

Commercial activities are clustered around a commercial node located at the intersection of North Main Street and Patrick Henry Drive and are designed to serve local residents. Smaller convenience stores are located near and within neighborhoods and are designed to blend in with the residential character of the surrounding area. Professional offices are located along North Main Street in the area between North Main Street and Giles Road. These office parks are designed at a residential, pedestrian scale with uses targeting the immediate area.

Land north of Bishop Road on the slope of Brush Mountain has remained open and forested or developed at a very low density with lot sizes of five acres or more. This area provides natural scenic views for residents and visitors to enjoy. The area has maintained its open, rural feel. Open fields and attractive vistas have been preserved. Public parks are located near and within neighborhoods, providing safe areas for children to play and for family and community recreational activities. Residents appreciate the North End for its open spaces, attractive developments, and family environment, which contribute to the town's overall quality of life.

Special Considerations

- ◆ Development north of Bishop Road should be single-family residential homes on lots of five acres or more. As little of the natural vegetation should be disturbed as possible to preserve scenic views of the mountainside and to control erosion. Any development that does occur should blend in with the natural landscape to minimize impacts on scenic views.
- ◆ The manufactured home parks on Givens Lane and adjacent to Whipple Drive should provide a well maintained neighborhood setting that offers affordable housing.
- ◆ Commercial uses should be primarily clustered around the commercial node at the intersection of North Main Street and Patrick Henry Drive. These commercial uses should be designed to serve residents of the north end of Town.
- ◆ The area between North Main Street and Giles Road should be redeveloped into a professional office park(s) that is cohesive and fits the local residential character. Access points should be limited to facilitate traffic flow on North Main Street and to improve the attractiveness of the area. Structures should

have a common design theme that ties them together and should be well landscaped.

- ◆ New single-family residential developments should develop in a fashion that preserves open space and agricultural areas. Zoning standards require that a portion of the development site be preserved as open space. These standards will aid in preserving the rural feel of the North End.
- ◆ A new community park and elementary school will be needed in the North End as the area develops and demands on current school facilities increase.
- ◆ Places of worship are shown on the future land use map in their 2001 locations, because they are important anchors in a neighborhood and should be retained. They are an appropriate use in most neighborhoods when developed at a scale consistent with the surrounding community, as allowed by special use permit. The town does not wish to limit future locations of places of worship to the indicated map areas.
- ◆ Where sanitary sewer service is currently unavailable, developments should either provide for the ultimate connection to sanitary sewer when the system is available or provide a publicly approved decentralized wastewater system.
- ◆ The Creek Valley Overlay District is necessary to protect water quality and reduce the potential for contamination.
- ◆ Any land disturbing activities, fertilizer and herbicide application, or other possible sources of water contamination should be set back an adequate distance from Tom's Creek and its tributaries with natural vegetative buffers to protect water quality.
- ◆ Land and/or scenic easements should be acquired along Tom's Creek to create a large greenway.
- ◆ An Open Space Land Use Assessment tax break is needed to encourage the dedication of open space by large landowners.
- ◆ Development should be clustered on less than half of the site with the remainder of the site being reserved in permanent open space.
- ◆ Preservation of open space is a special consideration when reviewing development in the North End sector. Ridgelines, hilltops, land identified in the Greenway Master Plan, land adjacent to existing public parks, to existing preserved open space or to the Creek Valley Overlay is of significant value to the community. It may be appropriate to consider an increase in density for the development of a parcel where land of significant value off-site will be preserved as open space. This special consideration may only occur if the land is determined to be of significant value to the community and the additional density does not compromise the integrity of the receiving site.

Approximately three-quarters or more of the off-site parcel may be proffered as permanent open space.

- ◆ Both public and private efforts to preserve agricultural and open lands through land trusts, open space easements, purchase of development rights, and fee simple acquisition is strongly encouraged.
- ◆ Agriculture will be encouraged to continue as a by-right use throughout the Northend neighborhood.
- ◆ Approval of special use and rezoning requests for neighborhood commercial uses will be considered when appropriate design criteria are achieved. Commercial uses should be designed to serve the immediate community and be very small in scale.
- ◆ Inclusion of small-scale neighborhood commercial uses in large planned residential developments will be considered. These establishments should be pedestrian oriented and not generate additional traffic from outside of the immediate area.
- ◆ Commercial uses that are intended to attract people off of the Route 460 Bypass should not be permitted in the sector.
- ◆ Sidewalks, footpaths, or appropriate alternative pedestrian circulation systems should be constructed in all new residential developments.
- ◆ Improvements will be made to Bishop Road, Mt. Tabor Road, and Givens Lane including two lanes, bike lanes, sidewalk, and off-road trails as appropriate to ensure the safety of current and anticipated residents.
- ◆ A grade separated interchange at North Main Street and the Route 460 Bypass is needed and will be constructed within the next fifteen years.

Changes From Existing Land Use Map

- Future development adjacent to the Route 460 Bypass including its future interchange at North Main Street should be well planned to minimize deterioration of the viewscape. Appropriate screening and innovative construction are encouraged to preserve the view shed along this corridor.
- Tom's Creek and its surrounding floodplain are designated as open, and this area is intended to be a major feature of the town greenway system.
- The Whipple Drive area is designated transitional residential for the continuation of housing attractive to first time homebuyers, young families, empty nesters, and professionals.

- The area between North Main Street and Giles Road is designated for office uses rather than a mix of commercial and residential uses. This designation is intended to facilitate the development of coordinated commercial, office, and residential uses in this area.
- Current open areas directly north of Mt. Tabor Road and Givens Lane are designated to be low density residential.
- The area north of Bishop Road is designated agricultural/very low density residential and is intended to remain in its natural forested state and residential development with a five-acre minimum lot size.
- Land designated as Very Low Density Residential may be included in a Conservation Overlay, Planned Residential, or Rural Residential zoning district.
- A Conservation Overlay District may include limited very low density residential development, recreation areas, agricultural land, and open space.

MIDTOWN NORTH

VISION

Midtown North in 2046 is a place where it's easy and safe for pedestrians and bicyclists to get around Town. The Central Blacksburg Greenway extends through the sector providing a large multi-use arterial trail, which connects sector residents to the town's park system and downtown amenities. Historic buildings are preserved, well maintained, and owners of these properties readily come to the town's design review board to receive architectural advice on projects.

Commercial areas are concentrated in attractive, landscaped nodes, and strip development is minimized. Residents are friendly and involved in their community. All residents are connected to the Blacksburg Electronic Village. There is a low crime rate. Neighborhoods retain their distinctive character, incorporating places of worship, diverse architecture, mature trees, and street lighting appropriate to the character of the neighborhood. All areas are well maintained. Conflicts between student and non-student residents are minimal, and resolved in an amicable fashion. All structures are well maintained and there is no physical distinction between rental and owner occupied properties. Streets, public areas, and commercial areas are well landscaped.

Views of the surrounding mountains and downtown area are visible from several points throughout this sector. At night, the area is safely and attractively lighted with fixtures that minimize light pollution. Midtown North is culturally and demographically diverse -- ethnically, racially, economically, and by age. This

sector has neighborhood elementary schools and a high school. This part of Town is easy and safe to bike, walk, or drive through with minimal congestion. Vehicular traffic violations are low and do not adversely affect the area's quality of life.

Special Considerations

- ◆ The need for additional neighborhood parks should be examined, especially near existing elementary schools. There is little vacant land left in this sector. Where feasible, the town should acquire property to provide public open space. Any new developments within or directly adjacent to this sector should include recreational space to accommodate the area's needs.
- ◆ The Rental Permitting Program should be expanded to include transitional residential housing areas within this neighborhood. This will help offset the potentially adverse effects of enrollment increases.
- ◆ Office uses should be limited to arterial and collector roads and should not infiltrate into existing residential neighborhoods. Office uses within, adjacent to, or at the entrance of residential neighborhoods should utilize an existing residential property, or construct new buildings with an appropriate scale and design that will not detract from the residential neighborhood.
- ◆ Places of worship are shown on the future land use map in their 2001 locations, because they are important anchors in a neighborhood and should be retained. They are an appropriate use in most neighborhoods when developed at a scale consistent with the surrounding community, as allowed by special use permit. The town does not wish to limit future locations of places of worship to the indicated map areas.
- ◆ Construct additional public parking in the Blacksburg Municipal Park to alleviate parking issues at the Municipal Park and nearby Blacksburg High School.
- ◆ Any non-residential development adjacent to an alley should be prohibited from using the alley as the primary vehicular access.
- ◆ In the Kabrich Street neighborhood, explore the possibility of a conservation district designation or other technique to improve the area while continuing to support the small single-family neighborhood.
- ◆ Improved pedestrian crossings at the major roads such as North Main Street, Price's Fork Road, Patrick Henry Drive, and University City Boulevard.

Changes From Existing Land Use Map

Since Midtown North is already quite developed, few dramatic changes are seen between the 2001 and 2046 maps.

- In general the changes will increase residential density in the areas close to the university, or near existing apartment developments, due to market demand for apartments and townhouses by students.
- Some small areas of single family will be built on currently vacant parcels, but for the most part, new residential development will be medium and high density residential.
- In response to the pressure for greater density, it is important that the town or other entities preserve open space as much as possible. Vacant land in this sector should be developed in a sensitive manner that preserves or enhances the character of the existing neighborhood, if not otherwise protected.
- A new interchange at the Route 460 Bypass and Tom's Creek Road will provide better access at the northwestern end of the sector.

MIDTOWN SOUTH

VISION

Midtown South is a place where it's easy and safe for pedestrians and bicyclists to get around Town. Multi-use trails connect residents within the sector to the Huckleberry Trail as well as the town's park system and downtown amenities. Historic buildings are preserved, well maintained, and owners readily utilize the town's design review board to receive architectural advice on projects.

Commercial areas are concentrated in attractive, landscaped nodes, and strip development is minimized. Residents are friendly and involved in their community. All residents are connected to the Blacksburg Electronic Village. There is a low crime rate. Neighborhoods retain their distinctive character, incorporating places of worship, diverse architecture, mature trees, and street fixtures appropriate to the character of the neighborhood. Conflicts between student and non-student residents are minimal and resolved in an amicable fashion. All properties and structures are well maintained and there is no physical distinction between rental and owner-occupied properties. Streets, public areas, and commercial areas are well landscaped.

Views of the surrounding mountains and downtown area are visible from several points throughout the sector. The sector has streetlights that provide a safe atmosphere, yet minimize light pollution. Midtown South is culturally and

demographically diverse -- ethnically, racially, economically, and by age. This sector has neighborhood elementary schools. The former middle school site has been renovated as a multi-use, civic structure and is a community anchor and recreational space. This part of town is easy and safe to drive, bike, or walk through with minimal congestion. Vehicular traffic violations are reduced and do not adversely affect the quality of life.

Special Considerations

- ◆ The need for additional neighborhood parks should be examined, especially near the existing elementary school. Where feasible, the town should acquire property to provide public open space. Any new developments within or directly adjacent to this sector should include recreation space that accommodates the area's needs.
- ◆ A water tank is proposed for The Hill Golf Course to better serve the area. This facility should be constructed to minimize impacts to the area's view shed and maximize opportunities for multiple cellular antennas.
- ◆ The Rental Permitting Program should be expanded to include transitional residential housing areas within the sector. This is needed to offset the potentially adverse effects of an increase in rental properties as students move into neighborhoods.
- ◆ Office uses should be limited to arterial and collector roads. Office uses should not infiltrate into the existing residential neighborhoods. Office uses within, adjacent to, or at the entrance to residential neighborhoods should utilize the existing residential property on-site or construct the new building in a scale and design that does not detract from the character of the neighborhood.
- ◆ Places of worship are shown on the future land use map in their 2001 locations, because they are important anchors in a neighborhood and should be retained. They are an appropriate use in most neighborhoods when developed at a scale consistent with the surrounding community, as allowed by special use permit. The town does not wish to limit future locations of places of worship to the indicated map areas.
- ◆ Any development other than residential occurring adjacent to an alley should be prohibited from using the alley as a primary vehicular access.
- ◆ Improved pedestrian crossings at major roads such as South Main Street and Ellett Road.

Changes From Existing Land Use Map

Since Midtown South is already quite developed, few dramatic changes are seen between the 2001 and 2046 maps.

- In general the changes will tend to be in increasing residential density in areas closer to the university, near existing apartment or office developments due to high market demand for multi-family housing by students.
- Some small single-family residential houses will be built on currently vacant parcels, but most new residential development will be medium or high density residential.
- In response to the pressure for greater density, it is important that the town or other entities preserve open space as much as possible. Vacant land in this sector should be developed in a sensitive manner that preserves or enhances the character of the existing neighborhood, if not otherwise protected.
- The new Hubbard-Southgate Connector project will provide better access to Virginia Tech's main campus and alleviate congestion in the downtown area and along the western and southern neighborhoods of the sector.

UNIVERSITY

VISION

Virginia Tech continues to be a primary industry in Blacksburg and ranks among the top 30 research institutions in the country. The heart of campus activity continues to be the Drillfield. A "village" atmosphere is focused around the Mall. The campus core consists of pedestrian-scaled quadrangles and courtyards, maintaining reasonable walking distances within and between academic and residential areas, and the downtown. This core campus area extends west along Price's Fork Road, stopping at the Route 460 Bypass.

The core is surrounded by a greenbelt, including extensive parklands and reforested areas that weave through the campus, connecting with the greater townwide greenway network. The trail network is extensive, providing ample opportunity for cycling and walking to campus destinations and throughout Town. The agricultural and pastoral landscape between the Route 460 Bypass and the campus core is partially retained and links the campus with the surrounding regional environment.

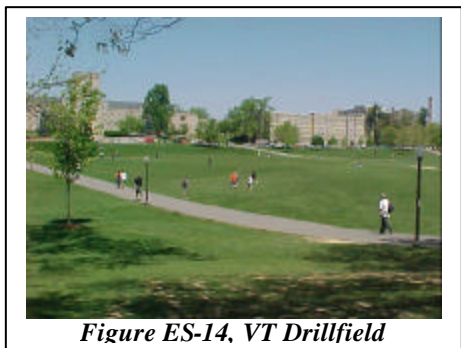


Figure ES-14, VT Drillfield

The Corporate Research Center is an international research park featuring many technology-based industries. The center has expanded around the airport toward Southgate Drive, which has been improved to include a connection to Hubbard Street, with a grade separated interchange at the Route 460 Bypass, and an extension to the Hethwood community.

Changes From Existing Land Use Map

Few land use changes are seen between the 2001 and 2046 maps. Changes include:

- Expansion of the campus area to the west, across the Route 460 Bypass, into the Southwest sector.
- Redefinition of major agricultural lands surrounding the Veterinary Medicine facilities to campus park.
- Expansion of the Special Purpose Housing area towards the west (denoted as Civic) to accommodate at least 25 buildings, each housing up to 35 residents.
- Expansion of the Corporate Research Center area, denoted as Research/Light Industrial, toward the Dairy Science barns.
- An interchange at Southgate Drive/Route 460 Bypass with eventual extension of Southgate Drive (Rt. 314) west to the Hethwood community and Merrimac Road.
- Preservation of the scenic corridor along the Route 460 Bypass.

EXTRATERRITORIAL AREAS

VISION

The north Montgomery County area is defined by Price Mountain and the Direct Link (Smart Road) on the south, Paris Mountain on the east, Brush Mountain on the north/northwest, and the New River on the west. Blacksburg lies within the heart of the north county area and provides a town center with commercial services and office locations, as well as the more densely clustered housing areas. The town, as the urban center of the area, provides retail and cultural vitality while retaining a small town feel.

The transition across town boundaries into the unincorporated area is seamless and transparent to the residents. On the eastern fringe of Blacksburg are residential communities that gradually decrease in density (increase in parcel size) as distance from the corporate limits increases. Suburban style housing lies along or near the boundary of Town, and appears as an extension of neighborhoods

within the town. As development moves further down the hillsides and away from Town, large lot residential and small agricultural properties become more frequent. In the valleys and gently rolling hills, agricultural uses on large farms predominate, particularly in the Mount Tabor region and base of the North Fork Valley. Small rural village commercial centers exist in historic structures in the Luster's Gate and Ellett crossroads areas.

To the north of Town, the slope of Brush Mountain is forested and contains very large lot residential with conservation easements. The appearance of the mountain face is natural, and there is no ridgeline development or significant clearing that would indicate disruption of the scenic viewscape. Greenways, bikeways, hiking and equestrian trails wind from the town up the slope into the National Forest. These connections are open to the public and have been developed in a low impact manner that is not apparent from the various views of the mountain.

To the west there is a rural village commercial center in the community of Price's Fork. Limited suburban developments surround this village, and large lot residential, small farm agricultural type development spans the area between the town and Price's Fork. North and southeast of Price's Fork large agricultural industry uses continue. The area to the west of Price's Fork and the Merrimac area provide opportunities for large lot wooded residential tracts, and communities with affordable housing nestled along the steep slopes and valleys of this former mining area.

Price's Mountain to the south remains largely undisturbed in a natural forested condition. Limited planned conservation style residential development is located on the north face of the mountain, yet not apparent from significant view sheds. Trails and greenway connections wind through the Stroubles Creek valley from the town and meander up to the mountain ridge, on to the New River, and ultimately to the New River Trail.

The mid-County commercial corridor provides a medical office center and a range of retail commercial offerings. Entrances are minimized and coordinated between properties, and coordinated traffic signals provide for ease of access into and out of commercial sites. The Route 460/3A interchange also provides convenient access around this area. The land use around the interchange is well planned and includes residential and commercial uses off a frontage road that links Yellow Sulfur Road to Route 114. Open space and good landscaping are prominent features in this area amongst the planned developments and extensive road network.

The north county area presents a dramatic sense of entrance from each of the bounding mountain peaks and primary highway entrances. The natural beauty of the landscape is apparent with largely undisturbed ridges and mountain slopes, large farms in the rolling terrain of the valleys, and a gradual variation to large

individual lots on the slopes surrounding the town, to create a sense of arrival at each entrance to Town.

Special Considerations

- ◆ Village commercial centers at Price's Fork, Luster's Gate, and Ellett are small and rural in nature. Services range from neighborhood grocery and machine repair to farm supply and others that serve the immediately surrounding population. The commercial centers should be supplemental to, and complimentary of, the commercial services provided in the town. Regional facilities such as department stores are not appropriate for these areas.
- ◆ Development on mountain slopes, if any, should be in a conservation pattern with either very large lots that retains natural forest cover and the subsequent clearing of individual properties is severely limited; or planned development where building sites are carefully chosen to minimize clearing and grading and large portions of the property are permanently preserved in their natural state, with greenway and trail connections.
- ◆ Interstate and primary highway construction should minimize use of frontage roads and associated strip development tendencies, and no interchange should be provided in the North Fork Valley between Blacksburg and Interstate 81 on the Smart Road. Interchanges within the north county area are to remain scenic and consistent with surrounding uses. Extensive landscaping and attractive, efficient signage should be an integral part of all roadway development.
- ◆ Development immediately adjacent to Town boundaries should be similar in use, street standards, and other amenities to the area of Town to which it is adjacent in order to assure compatibility and a seamless transition across the corporate limits. This consideration is valid for residential, industrial, and all other major use types.
- ◆ The town and county must jointly address future traffic congestion along Harding Avenue, Nellie's Cave, Ellett, Mt. Tabor, Glade, and Prices Fork Roads. Future land uses in the county will be the key traffic generator.
- ◆ Bottom Creek and Little Stony Creek, in Montgomery, Giles, and Roanoke Counties, should be protected by the state as exceptional state waters. This designation is recommended by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and would protect the streams from new or increased pollution discharges.

Changes from Existing Land Use Map

- Mountain ridges are preserved, and mountain slopes are conserved to retain natural and scenic appearance.
- The McCoy Falls area should be protected, including Virginia Tech's Whitethorne property, and efforts should be made to work with landowners on issues related to the recreational activities in the area such as the creation of regional greenways and blueways, and improved public access to the New River.
- Retention of agricultural uses is emphasized. Water and sewer utilities are not extended into areas planned to remain in large agricultural use. Subdivision of agricultural lands is strongly discouraged.
- Extend Southgate/314 West to Merrimac Road to provide a secondary access to Warm Hearth Village and the Hethwood community.
- The population of the north county area is clustered in and around the town and the densities of development within the unincorporated county are less than within the town.
- Trails and greenways are continuous through Town, and into unincorporated areas surrounding the town, and connect to significant features such as the Coal Miner's Heritage Park, the New River Trail State Park, and U.S. National Forest.
- Nellie's Cave Park will expand into the adjoining County property for joint recreational use as a Community Park for the area.
- Commercial and industrial growth is limited and directed into currently planned commercial and industrial areas. Village commercial uses remain rural in nature.
- Land use around the Route 460 Blacksburg/Smart Road Interchange will be carefully planned to balance the preservation of open space, allowed under the current agricultural zoning, and limited commercial and residential development as demand increases in this valuable and strategic area.